



Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 1997 CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Children born to HIV infected mothers have a 15–25% chance of being infected with the virus (based on no maternal-neonate zidovudine therapy). Early detection of infection in the mother can lead to treatment that can improve the health of the mother and reduce the risk of transmission to the infant. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends routine HIV counseling and voluntary testing for all pregnant women and women of childbearing age; California requires providers to offer voluntary testing to all pregnant women. Prior to the 1997 California Women's Health Survey, little information was available about the reasons California women were tested for HIV.

During 1997, 4010 California women age 18 and over were interviewed by telephone, and asked whether they had ever been tested for HIV infection and

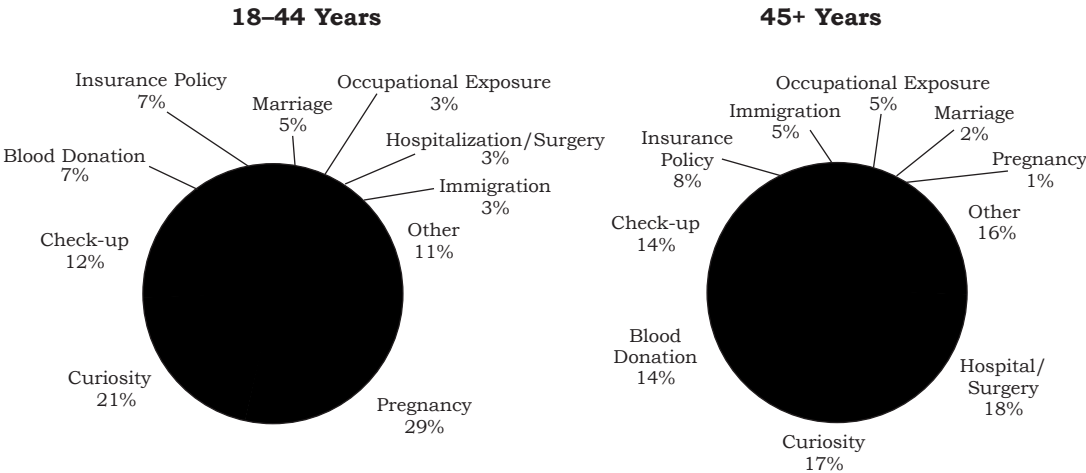
the main reason for having received their most recent test.

- 41% of women had been tested for HIV infection.
- Among all women, reasons for the most recent HIV test included pregnancy (23%), curiosity (20%), routine checkup (12%), blood donation (9%), hospitalization or a surgical procedure (6%), insurance policy (6%), marriage (4%), immigration (4%), and occupational exposure (4%).
- Because of pregnancy, 18–44 year-olds were tested most frequently. Those 45 and older were tested most frequently for hospitalization/surgery.
- While overall, only 2% of women were tested because they had unprotected sex with a partner of unknown HIV status, 4% of 18–24 year-olds were tested for this reason.

REASON FOR MOST RECENT HIV TEST AMONG WOMEN; CALIFORNIA, 1997

Office of Women's Health

Reason for Most Recent HIV Test Among Women; California, 1997



Public Health Message:

Women of childbearing age (18–44) are most likely to have had their most recent HIV test because of pregnancy. Older women are most likely to have been recently tested because of hospitalization or surgery. “Curiosity” was reported as the second most common reason for being tested in both age groups.

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